

# White Sands holds **Safety & Total Health Day 1999**

**A**t the White Sands Test Facility, where controlling chemical, explosive, and industrial hazards is a daily ritual, safety and health are serious subjects. On November 18, 1999, employees learned during the WSTF Safety & Total Health Day that they are fun subjects as well.

In years past, WSTF conducted a single Safety & Total Health Day management session for a half-day aimed at WSTF managers, supervisors, and facility health, safety, and environmental managers. The balance of time was left to individual WSTF organizations to conduct safety and health awareness activities often days after the management session. This year's activities were special. WSTF Manager Joe Fries directed that a single, integrated program be conducted where all employees could concentrate on safety and health and share the experience.

The new Safety & Total Health Day concept was a terrific success with WSTF employees. NASA Project Manager Mike Kirsch was elated. "Each year I am amazed with our ability to improve over the previous year's Safety & Total Health Day," said Kirsch. "My hat goes off once again to this year's organizers." Honeywell Laboratories employee Steve McDougle was also impressed with the new program stating, "I liked having a facility-wide event very much. I got to see things in other departments that were very beneficial." Honeywell Propulsion employee Carmon Pennington added, "[This year's] Safety & Total Health Day was the best we ever had."

If the organization of WSTF's Safety & Total Health Day resembled JSC's Safety & Total Health Day, it was no coincidence. Just weeks earlier, representatives of WSTF's Keystone Employee Safety Committee participated in the JSC Safety & Total Health Day as guests of the JSC Safety Awareness Team. The Keystone representatives brought back an appreciation for the festive educational environment at JSC and were determined to emulate the experience with an added WSTF spin. "The first thing that hit us at JSC was that the whole site took the day off to concentrate on safety and health," said Keystone Committee Chairman Holger Fischer, "and that really impressed us." Keystone Committee member Jill Rollings added, "We recognized that everybody [at WSTF] had an opportunity to participate." In addition, JSC employees including Perry Bennett, Sean Keppta, and the folks at the Public Affairs Office, contributed to the success of WSTF's Safety & Total Health Day by providing helpful advice and hundreds of promotional items.

A team was formed to plan WSTF Safety & Total Health Day made up of representatives from every organization and the Keystone Committee. They had straightforward objectives: identify and schedule programs and venues across the site; coordinate organizational plans and contributions; and implement methods to encourage maximum employee participation. WSTF Safety & Health Day Planning Team

member Cheerie Patneau described the planning experience. "There was great enthusiasm because we had common goals," she said. "We were encouraged by management to be innovative in creating a Safety & Total Health Day that everyone could participate in. That made us zealous to create something special." NASA Program Analyst and Planning Team member James Lucero added, "It was a lot of work, but it makes you feel good to know you increased safety and health awareness at work and at home."



Astronaut Steve Oswald has the attention of a rapt audience in the WSTF Rotunda.

Throughout the day 30 programs, activities, games, and presentations were conducted around the site, providing fun safety and health learning experiences for WSTF employees. Among the special guests at WSTF was a representative of Powerhouse Gym in nearby Las Cruces who provided guidance on diet and nutrition, exercise, and healthy lifestyle. Representatives of El Paso Electric provided a dramatic demonstration of electrical hazards and practical precautions. From the adjacent White Sands Missile Range, experts provided familiarization about regional wildlife and the dangers of unexploded military ordnance in the vicinity. Some of the most popular activities were games. "Safety Jeopardy," developed by Honeywell Laboratories employees Michelle Barragan, Brad Forsythe, and Ron Samaniego, was a hit with participants. The quiz contest featured questions developed from WSTF safety, health, and operational requirements. Games of skill

run by the Keystone Committee were not complete without challenging questions about OSHA's Voluntary Protection Programs. When asked about game results, Keystone Committee member Sean Gates replied, "Everybody was a winner."

Yes, JSC does own and operate a fully equipped fire department. It's just 800 miles west of Houston at WSTF. Members of

prepared we are to protect employees and the facility."

WSTF management provided a consistent safety and health message during repeated sessions to ensure every



Honeywell Propulsion employees (left to right) Louis Lambardi, Vince Perea, and Dave Lawrence demonstrate fully encapsulating suits used to protect workers against harmful propellant vapors.



WSTF Firefighter Joe Leos provides fire extinguisher instruction to WSTF employees (left to right) George Aldrich, Delores Puentes, Judah Smith and Michelle Fiala.

WSTF's proud Fire and Emergency Services Section were big contributors to Safety & Total Health Day, starting with an honorary breakfast for Fire Warden and Emergency Response Team volunteers. In addition, fire extinguisher training was conducted throughout the day, and an exciting "Fire Attack" exercise put WSTF employees to the test with emergency equipment. Lt. Eric Crespin, Honeywell Fire and Emergency Services, noted that Safety & Total Health Day is an opportunity to provide positive Emergency Services exposure to WSTF employees. "By welcoming people into the Emergency Center," said Crespin, "it provided a better understanding of our capabilities and how well

further reduce injuries. Baker introduced the Keystone Committee, which provided familiarization with OSHA VPP concepts, highlighted safety accomplishments, and asked for employee diligence in identifying and helping resolve safety and health concerns.

A popular guest at WSTF's Safety & Total Health Day was Astronaut Steve Oswald. During several packed sessions at WSTF's Rotunda, audiences listened intently to Oswald's discussions on the importance of teamwork in safety, his shuttle mission experiences, the evolution of space travel, and the complexities of International Space Station assembly. Following his feature presentation, Oswald stayed for more than one hour talking with individual WSTF employees and autographing pictures. Oswald definitely won over WSTF folks as Raytheon SR&QA employee Allison Jones said, "Steve Oswald was great and his presence really boosted the day." L&M Engineering employee Lori Kubinski added, "What a great storyteller!"

A Fun Run/Walk under a perfect New Mexico fall afternoon sky capped off WSTF's Safety & Total Health Day. There may still be arguments brewing over the winner of the Fun Run, but as far as WSTF safety and health goes, everybody was a winner. ■



Honeywell Engineering employee Irene Marrufo braces for impact in the "Convincer," a seatbelt motivator provided by the Dona Ana County, N.M. Sheriff's Department.